

The darkness



The Darkness by **hellsgcddess**

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Summary: Sage Denbrough was the oldest sibling Bill had. She was 18 and hated the rules that the small town of Derry had. She stayed out late and didn't listen to her parents. She was an adult and could do what she wanted. That is, until she met Paul. Paul brought out a side of Sage that she didn't know she had, and Paul was going to abuse that side of her even if it killed her.

1. Alleyways

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A/N: Well, if anyone follows me on Tumblr, they know that I've been writing this for a few months, and I just now got the balls to actually post it. So, here's my Pennywise/OC fic. I'll say it now, but if I get any hate on this story, like all my others, you'll be reported and blocked. Anyway. Sage and Nova are actually tied for my favorites. Sage is Bill's brother...as you read in the summary. But she's amazing and badass and great. Enjoy, and tell me if you like it.

— 10 years ago.

I giggled as I looked up at the tall man, who held hundreds and hundreds of red balloons in his hand, smiling down at me with kind blue eyes, the exact ones my mom had. "Mister, that's a lot of balloons!" I told him, giving him a toothy smile.

The man gave me a giggle back, bending down to poke my nose, "What's your name?" He asked, the bells in his outfit jingling slightly. "I'll go first. I'm Pennywise...the dancing clown!" He shook slightly, letting me hear the pretty bells again.

"I'm Sage!" I frowned for a second, "I should really go back to my parents now..." I mumbled, turning around when they called my name in fear. I turned back to the tall figure, my smile gone.

Pennywise frowned, thinking for a moment. "How about," He mused, "I give you a balloon? So you'll always remember me?" He looked up at his balloon and picked one out, handing it to me, "This one's special." He whispered. "You'll remember me, won't you?" He asked, as I took a step back, smiling at the balloon that floated above my head.

"Promise, Penny!" I grinned, before bounding off, back to my parents.

I turned around, frowning when the clown wasn't there anymore, but rather a bunch of balloons floating. I shrugged, and turned around, seeing my parents running to me.

"Sage! Don't ever run off again!" My mom told me, pointing a finger at me, as I frowned, nodding. Then, her eyes moved up. "Where'd you get that?" She asked, a strange look in her eyes.

"Mister Pennywise gave it to me!" I grinned, rocking on my heels. "He's a clown! I saw him in the woods." I pointed back to where I was, a large smile still on my face.

My mom's eyes shifted in look, before she gave me a smile, "Of course, honey." She eyed the woods, "Let's go get some ice cream, yeah?"

"Okay!" I giggled, making sure my balloon was with me as we went to the car.

"Hey, do you have a light?" I heard a young voice say to me, as I turned around, and saw Bev Marsh smiling sheepishly at me. "Hey, wait, you're..."

"Bill's older sister, yep." I didn't mention Georgie, everyone knew him, but we all knew that he was dead. Or at least, everyone thought he was. Bill told me he was missing, even though I think he just didn't want to admit it to himself. After all, Bill was the last one to talk to Georgie. I gave a lazy salute and handed her a lighter. "...why are you wet?" I frowned.

"Trash soup." She answered as I winced and nodded. I knew the feeling. I had already graduated from Derry High School, just last summer. But I knew about Bev, and the rumors that went around town about her. Even though if you actually knew her, she was quiet and hated the rules as much as I did. I knew that her mom passed away a few years back and that she lived with her dad, but, that was it. "You know the feeling?" She caught up to my pace as I heard my brothers' friends talk behind us. Richie was always the worst.

I smiled down at her, "Well, how about we go get some ice cream to

make the first day of summer a lot better?" She glanced over to the side, silently telling me she didn't want the boys to come. I nodded, then turned around to face the group of boys. "No catcalling friends of my brother allowed." I looked at Richie as I said the words then smiled at Bill.

"Go home, kid. Make sure to take the system down before dad gets home." I kissed his hair as he gave me a nod. "Be good." I smiled over at Bev as the boys went in a different direction, as I stopped when I heard Henry Bowers' make fun of my brother. I sighed, and walked over, glaring at the teen. I grabbed his arm and watched the fear in his eyes get worse than it was. His dad was watching just a few feet away. "I'd really advise you to knock it off." I all but growled, before moving away.

I knew that I'd be home late. Late enough that it really wouldn't be worth unlocking the door to face the wrath of my parents. I knew that they had probably called the cops already, telling them that I was missing, or dead. Anxiety flipped in my stomach as I realized I should definitely be at home, in bed, sleeping. Or at least doing something.

I wandered the eerily silent streets of Derry, watching streetlights flicker here and there as I walked. I froze as I heard what sounded like growling but knew we didn't have any wild coyotes until later in the summer. It came from an alleyway that I should've probably walked away from very quickly. Did I? No. I grabbed my pepper spray from my keys, and peeked around the corner, seeing nothing but darkness. The growling had stopped, which made my stomach drop down to my ankles. Well, I'm dead.

I let out a scream and sprayed whoever touched me, backing away as a tall figure groaned in pain, holding their face. "Shit, that burns." My non-attacker mumbled into their hands, while I clutched my pepper spray and backed against the wall.

"Um." I tilted my head as the figure got a little better over their eyes burning. "Sorry?" I frowned. I bit my lip, chewing on the flesh as I shifted my weight, waiting for the person to at least say something. Anything, at this point.

"It's...okay." They looked down at me, and smiled. "I didn't mean to... scare you." They spoke. "It was my fault anyway, sneaking up on you like that." I heard a giggle fall from their lips.

I blinked at him. "Well, um, it's okay?" I looked back down the alley where I heard the growling. "I heard...something I thought it was an animal or something, I don't know." I frowned again, playing with the ends of my hair; another anxiety tick.

"I didn't hear anything..." The tall man mused, wiping his mouth as he seemed to realize something. "I'm sorry. I'm...Paul." He frowned for a second before nodding. "Paul." He smiled again.

"I'm Sage." I gave him a smile back, as I took in his features. He seemed familiar but I couldn't figure out from where. The blue eyes, the smile...I frowned for a second, my expression faltering. "It's nice to meet you." I wasn't sure why it came out as a whisper.

"Sage," He whispered my name, "Like the...herb?" He giggled slightly, as I shrugged.

"I guess? It was my great grandmother's name. But she passed so I can't ask her why her parents named her that." I rambled for a moment.

"Oh, I'm sorry." Paul frowned, touching my shoulder. My skin burned under his skin. "How long ago did she pass?" He asked, lighting a cigarette.

I followed suit, and nodded at a bench with better-ish lighting. "Like, 27 years ago. I never met her." I shrugged again. "When did you come to Derry? Usually, everyone knows each other, but...I've never seen you." That was a small lie, he seemed so familiar, but I couldn't think back enough to figure out if I actually had met him before.

Paul thought for a moment while taking a drag. "...Not a people person. They tend to stay away from me and I do the same. I like the night better, less looking over your shoulder." He chuckled as I did, making sure there's nothing behind us. My heartbeat was rising again.

"Scared?" He whispered, as he blew out smoke.

"No." I lied through my teeth. "This town...I want to leave, but...I can't. There's something wrong here." I mumbled. "The town seemed haunted. Kids' go missing, from ages 4 to 16. Hell, my kid brother..." I frowned. "The poster's say he's missing, but I know he's dead," I whispered. "Something...took him. My other brother thinks he's in the sewers with it, as he calls it. He has this whole sewer system set up in the garage, trying to figure out where Georgie could be, but... He's not comin' back." I whispered. "Bill wants to know what happened, and our parents hate it, because they've come to terms with it," I stopped my sentence as the cops made their way around the town.

"Shit!" I got up, grabbing Paul, and running into the alley, hiding behind some trashcans as the cop car drove by slowly, checking for stragglers that were breaking curfew like I was. Or they were actually looking for me, they all knew what happened to my brother. "My parents must be freaking out," I mumbled, realizing that I was still holding onto Paul's hand. I quickly let go. "Sorry," I whispered.

He chuckled, his eyes seemed to glow topaz. "It's fine, dear. I can... take you home, if you'd like. Explain to your parents why you were out so late..." He trailed off, stepping closer as my heartbeat picked up again. "Scared again?" He seemed to growl for a moment, watching me closely, before straightening back up.

I swallowed my fear and shook my head. "No, that's okay. I'll face the wrath alone. My parents don't scare me."

We walked back out onto the main street, as Paul looked down at me. "Then what are you scared of?" His eyes glowed again.

"Whatever took my brother," I whispered. "It's still here, I know it." I glanced at Paul, who was listening intently. "Some kid who bullies my brother, Patrick, he went missing just two nights ago. He was in the sewers too." I whispered.

Paul stopped at a corner, a block away from my house. "It won't get to you." He seemed so sure of his answer. "It..." He frowned, shaking his head. I frowned, as I thought I heard bells. "I promise it won't hurt

you." He then gave me a big smile. "You're too old anyway." He laughed, as I chuckled, even though my gut was telling me to run.

"Thanks, because that's so helpful." I smiled. "But the promise doesn't bring back Georgie, or keep it safe from my brother and his friends." I frowned, before I felt a hand on my cheek, lifting my face slightly.

Paul seemed confused. "It's okay." The words came out as a question. "Go home, Sage. I'll see you again soon."

"When?" I whispered.

"How about....how about tomorrow? By the ice cream shop?" Paul smiled again. "Can't you taste it already?" He cocked his head, eyes glowing again.

I giggled and put my hands over my lips. I could taste the ice cream. "Woah." I let out another giggle before nodding. "Tomorrow."

"Around...8?" He gave me a smirk, knowing curfew was at 7.

"I'll try my best, I might need to sneak out." I whispered, "But that's a secret."

Paul nodded vigorously, "Secret. Shhhhhh!" He placed a finger to his lips as he nodded to my home, "Get some sleep, Sage. Dream happy things." He whispered.

I nodded, and then turned around, waving without looking back as I made my way home. When I made to my house, I could still taste my favorite ice cream. But the second I opened the door, it was gone, and all the lights turned on in the living room.

Well, shit.

"Sage Marie Anne, it's 3 AM!" My dad stood up as he yelled at me, "Where on earth have you been?!" My mother didn't say anything as she looked at me, tears in her eyes.

I could see Bill looking from his room, telling me that he needed to talk to me. He had also been crying. Shit, I really messed it up this time. I turned my attention back to my parents.

"I was just out and about, I stayed on the main street, I sat on the bench and talked to my new friend." I shrugged.

My mom raised an eyebrow, "What new friend?"

"His name's Paul." My stomach dropped again as I realized that his name was the only thing I knew about him, not where he lived in Derry, not his last name, nothing. Not even his age.

My dad mocked my words. "Is that all you know, just his name?! God dammit, Sage. Be an adult!" He got louder and louder.

I decided to risk it all. I yelled back. "I could be if you stopped treating me like a fucking child! I'm 18, a legal adult and then you pull shit like this! I don't actually need a curfew. If I wanted, I could become brain-dead like all the other adults in this damn town and not blink an eye when another kid goes missing!"

That shut everyone up. I could hear the clock ticking from the kitchen. The water dripping from the faucet that was in the bathroom.

"I'm going to bed." I finished, heading to Bill's room as I quietly slipped into the room.

Bill sat up, moving so I could sit next to him. "S-s-s-sage what w-w-was t-t-that?" He asked about my yelling.

"I'm a legal adult. I can do whatever I please." I shrugged. "Keeping my kid brother safe is on the top of that list." I smiled, ruffling his hair. "I'm sorry I scared you, buddy. I realized it as I was in that alleyway between the library and the ice cream shop how freaked out everyone was. I'm sorry."

Bill hugged me tightly. "Are y-y-y-you g-g-going to br-break curfew a-a-a-again?" He whispered.

"Yeah," I whispered back. "But I'll be home at 12, on the dot," I promised. I kissed his head, before I snuck back into my room, easily falling asleep as I thought about ice cream and glowing eyes.

I'm actually super nervous about posting this, because after all, it is a Pennywise fic and it's the first that I've seen so far. It's following the 2017 IT, if you haven't caught on. I'm also aware that Paul/Penny seems out of character, but it's all for good reason, I promise. As always, if you have any questions, comments, or concerns, leave them for me to read. — REMEMBER, NO FLAMES.

2. Ice Cream

Disclaimer I, Alyscha, do not own any of the following below, except the original characters, and the plotline. Stephen King owns all the rights.

I awoke with a groan, my dream from being 8 again and in the woods...with someone, I just couldn't debating if I wanted to roll back over and get another few hours of sleep in. I rolled out of bed and walked to my closet, picking out a shirt and a pair of jeans, knowing I probably wasn't coming home until 12 AM. I shouldn't have made the promise to Bill. I hated lying to him, and especially about curfew, but I wanted to see Paul again. I let out a sigh, moving to the bathroom without picking up my feet.

I knocked on Bill's door, and moved downstairs when I didn't get an answer. He was probably with his friends, his little gang.. My parents were sitting at the kitchen table discussing something quietly. But, soon as they saw me they grew quiet and drank their coffee. No, they weren't talking to me.

I let out a quiet sigh, and walked outside without saying a word, throwing my hands in my pocket, on the way to the main street. "Sage!" I frowned when I heard Bill yell my name, as I quickly turned around to see my brother and his friends — Bev included — running to me. I guess she was part of the gang now. They all looked terrified.

"Sage, we s-s-saw something. S-s-something sc-scary." Bill hugged me, as I kissed his head and pulled back. "It it was a c-c-clown." He told me. I chuckled slightly.

"Why the fuck are you laughing?" Richie tried to stand up to me as I looked down on him. "This..this thing was terrifying. It has sharp teeth and-and..." He trailed off, a shiver goi down his spine.

"Watch your mouth." I glared, "Tell me more about it while we walk, alright? Where did you see it, who saw and what happened?" I looked back at the group as my brother clutched my hand.

"I saw the clown at the Neibolt street. It had a triangle of balloons, and a walking virus chased me into the backyard of the house." Eddie told me as we made it to the main street.

I frowned. "The well house?" They all nodded. "Guys, I know you have brains. Use them next time and stay the fuck away from the house. All the plants are dead and its boarded up. It's not a horror movie, okay? Be smart." I ordered, before handing my brother a ten. "Go buy ice cream, yeah? I'll be around here."

They all gave me a chorus of thank you's while I sat on the bench and grabbed a cigarette, cursing when I didn't have a lighter on me. "Need a light?" I jumped out of my skin when Paul appeared next to me. He gave me a large smile and handed me matches.

"Jesus fuck! Where did you come from, holy shit." I recovered from a heart attack and light the cigarette while Paul had a laugh about scaring me. I glared half-heartedly at him. "You enjoy scaring me, don't you?"

He smirked and leaned to my ear, so close that I could feel his breath on my skin. "It's the best thing in the world." He pulled back while I recovered once again. "Ice cream?" He nodded to the shop while taking my cigarette away and taking a drag.

"Um..." I paused, still processing his words. "Sure. Yeah, Ice cream." I nodded, and slowly got up, following Paul's tall frame into the ice cream shop where my brother and his friends were all sitting in a corner, talking about something.

I watched Paul order, and give the worker a smile as they slowly looked at me. I glanced down at the flavors and glanced back up. "Can I get a scoop of raspberry in a waffle cone?" I said, and then glanced up at Paul, who was watching me carefully.

I was handed my ice cream while Paul paid and I heard Richie whispering about me. I sighed, and slowly turned around to face him. "Are you quite finished?" I stepped over to their table and towered over the boy. "Don't speak ill of me, understand?" I all but growled out as he nodded, and whispered sorry.

I walked outside and smiled at Paul, who gave me a confused look. "What was that about?" He turned back to look inside.

"Richie is...annoying at points. He talks shit and I'm not happy about it. They don't believe I can be scary unless I'm truly angry." I shrugged. "Bill doesn't see my angry unless he's with his friends, and it's usually Richie who gets me angry because he doesn't...think." I groaned.

There was a pause from the tall man next to me. "...how's the ice cream?" He raised an eyebrow. I looked up at him. "Mine's amazing. Would you like to...try it?" He grinned at me as he offered his ice cream.

"What flavor is it?" I raised an eyebrow.

"The fear and blood of my enemies." He nodded. I noticed that his eyes seemed to glow topaz again. "Yes..." He shook his head, and grinned down at me. "Vanilla." His eyes were back to his normal blue.

I shrugged. "Why not?" I smiled, and tasted some, pausing at the strange cooper taste. "Tastes kinda funny." I noticed, but ate more of my ice cream without questioning his further.

"Did your parents yell when you got home?" He asked, slowing his walk so I could keep up with him. "I hope...I didn't get you in trouble." He almost seemed to be pouting.

"It's whatever. They still treat me like a child when I'm an adult and I got tired of it. I might've yelled at my father." I whispered. Paul looked down at me with wide eyes. "They're not speaking to me today. Plus, I made my brother cry...he thought I ended up like Georgie."

"Dead?" Paul asked, then shook his head quickly. "Missing, I meant...missing." I frowned, just like last night...I heard the bells again.

"Yeah," I whispered, seeing a car pass as we walked under the kissing bridge. I looked up at him and paused. "Where are you from?"

"Hmm?" He looked down at me, ice cream on his nose. I laughed, and motioned for him to lower his face so I could actually reach, before I

wiped the ice cream off his nose, giggling. "I'm from...here. Like yesterday, not a people person. Neither were my parents." He smiled, his eyes lingering on my fingers.

I frowned. "Alright..." I smiled, booping him on the nose quickly.

Paul shook his head, giggling. He seemed to remember something and frowned. "Hey, are we still meeting later?" I nodded. "Good. I hate to be this person but I have to go..." He frowned. "I...forgot to feed my rat."

"Gross! A pet rat?" I shivered. but nodded anyway. "That's fine, I'll see you later. Ice cream shop again at 8?" He smiled and nodded.

"Try your ice cream again, tell me what it tasted like later." He whispered, close to my ear again before he seemed to disappear and I was alone again.

Well, hopefully, later will be more entertaining. It'll be nighttime and no one will be around... I thought to myself. I also made a mental note to ask Paul about his eyes, it...didn't seem normal.

Hey guys. I'm sorry for the long delay in the second chapter. I'll write the next chapter sooner. (Like tomorrow probably.) I hope you guys enjoyed.

3. After 8

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Later that day, I went back home and didn't hear a word from my parents, who simply glared at me as I walked in the door, after Bill who was done with his friends for the day. He turned to me as we walked up the stairs to our rooms.

"Who was that y-y-you were with in t-t-the ice cream s-s-shop?" Bill asked, leaning against my doorway as I moved past him to the closet to pick something better than the shorts I had on now.

"Friend of mine, little buddy." I smiled. "He's pretty cool. His eyes can change color." I commented as Bill walked in my room, looking confused. "When Paul gets excited about something his eyes turn this orangey amber color," I told him, with a smile.

"R-r-really? That's c-c-cool." Bill gave me a big grin, before sighing. "R-r-remember y-y-your p-p-promise." He gave me a nod, a pat on the back, and then he was gone.

I let out a sigh, before walking over to the window sill, frowning. It was raining, but...it wasn't water. I quickly walked over and locked my door, before opening the window, sticking my fingers out, and pulling it back to see exactly what it was raining.

I let out a silent gasp, and wiped the blood off my fingers, closing the window with super speed and shaking my head, closing my eyes and then slowly looking back out the window to see one of our neighbors smile creepily at me from across the street. I simply ducked under the window and closed my curtains.

"What the fuck is wrong with this town?" I mumbled as I changed. I sat in front of my mirror and did my makeup as 8 was approaching. Once I was done with getting ready, I stretched, and put my hair up in a ponytail. I threw on my jacket, and then walked down the stairs,

meeting my parents at the end.

"Where do you think you're going?" My father stood in front of me, tall and proud. I raised an eyebrow. "You're not going anywhere."

"Dad, how old am I?" I sighed. I didn't want to have this conversation again.

"18." He answered back, with venom in his tone. "You're still grounded."

I gave a scoff. "You never grounded me in the first place." I brushed past him, putting my hood up. I glanced back as I made my way to the sidewalk, seeing my father glare at me from the porch.

I rolled my eyes, and walked to the main street, sitting on the wet bench as I lit a cigarette. "A pretty girl like you shouldn't smoke. You won't get a husband that way." I looked up when someone spoke. It was an elderly woman with a creepy stare. I frowned as she moved closer.

I stood up when she got too close, that creepy smile still in place. "Can I help you, lady?" I frowned, taking a drag.

"Don't smoke, you'll never know what'll happen." She gave me a warning, before she turned around, and started hobbling the other way.

"Hey," I turned to see Paul walking to me. "How are you?"

"Wet." I turned back, and frowned deeply. "Did...did you see a lady? She was just there..." I trailed off when Paul gave me strange look. "Or earlier it rained...blood, I think?"

Paul gave a chuckle, "Are you okay, Sage?"

"I don't know," I pouted, before letting out a sigh and looking around. "Ice cream shop closed half an hour ago." I nodded to the sign. Paul frowned, but then perked up.

"There's the coffee shop! It's open until 10." He took my hand and dragged me with him, as I had to run to keep up with his walk.

"Wait." He stopped walking, and looked down at me. "It rained... blood?"

"I think so, that's what it looked like to me, and felt like it too. I stuck my hand out the window because the window shouldn't have been red but it was so I was confused and I'm pretty sure its blood. Then my neighbor saw and he just watched it happen like it wasn't raining blood even though I'm not sure it was-"

"Hey." Paul cut me off with his glowing eyes. "It's okay, nothing happened, it was just a trick of your mind." I frowned.

"There's something wrong with this town, I swear," I mumbled, as Paul put a hand on my shoulder to stop me again. I hummed and looked up at him, as he gave me a smile. "What?" I smiled.

He tilted his head. "What are you scared of?"

That caught me off guard. "What?" I thought as we stood in the rain. "Dying alone. That's my biggest fear." I nodded. "I've had boyfriends, but none of them have stayed after what happened to Georgie, they all said I'm cursed and no one will ever love me," I mumbled on. "I want to be able to prove them all wrong someday." I finished, watching Paul go through an array of emotions.

"Well...okay." He gave a little laugh, bells to be heard as he smiled. "I don't...I don't fear anything!" He looked down at me, with glowing eyes.

"Anything?!" I gave a fake gasp. "Not even death?" I raised an eyebrow. "growing old and being planted into the ground in a box that'll eventually rot away and then the rats will slowly chew through any skin you have left and then gnaw on the bones that were once able to do everything, but then, nothing?" I grinned wickedly at him as he blinked.

"When you put it that way, fuck," He mumbled. He looked down at me and watched me for a few moments. "You'd...write well. Books and such." He giggled, poking me on the nose as he finished his sentence.

"Thank you." I smiled, before I frowned, realizing where we were. "That's the house my brother and friends are scared of." I nodded to the Neibolt house. Paul chuckled as he looked at it.

"It's just a house." He commented. "If the rain gets any heavier we might have to go inside." He gave me a grin, stepping forward.

I raised an eyebrow, before hearing thunder. "Well, alright." I gave him a nod, as I grabbed his hand and pulled him to the door, opening it and peeking inside. "I guess they saw some clown here?" I turned back to Paul, as he watched me with glowing eyes. I frowned and waved a hand in front of his face. He shook his head and gave me a smile.

"Sorry, zoned out for a moment." He followed me inside and looked around. "Dusty."

I peeked around, "There's a piano!" I moved to it, and stepped back, into Paul. "There's a rat."

I nodded to the small creature. "And it doesn't look like a pet. It looks like a sewer rat." I commented, watching it as it moved away from the piano and scurried away down a hallway and into the wall.

"You play?" Paul whispered, his breath hitting my ear. I gave a slow nod.

"My mom taught me," I mumbled, before frowning. "What time is it?"

"11:30. Why?" Paul moved around me so he could look over to me. I sighed of relief and then faced the piano.

"Promised my brother that I'd be home by 12." Paul gave a nod, and then cleaned the keys off with his sleeve. "You...you didn't have to do that," I mumbled. "It's probably not tuned anyway..." I spoke, mostly to myself as I pressed on the keys. "Nevermind, I was wrong."

Paul chuckled, and watched in amazement as I started playing a melody, he watched my fingers move over the keys as I kept playing a random tune. "It's beautiful." He whispered when I took my hands off the piano.

"I wonder how old it is." I shrugged. Then I faced him, "Walk me home?"

Paul gave me a smile, "Of course."

"This is it?" Paul asked, looking at my house, where I could see Bill in the window.

I nodded and then turned to him. "Yep. My brother's in the window and I can see my parents getting ready to yell as soon as I walk in the door." I glanced over to the living room window where the curtains were twitching.

Paul chuckled, before brushing my wet hair from my face. "I'll see you whenever okay? I have to do some...things but if, you'll find me having a smoke on the main street. Okay?"

"After 8?" I gave him a grin.

"After 8." He smiled, shaking slightly as bells were heard once again. "Have a good night, Sage." He whispered before I walked to the door and turned to wave once more.

4. Morning Coffee

Disclaimer I, Alyscha, do not own any of the following below, except the original characters, and the plotline. Stephen King owns all the rights.

"Sage!" I sat up quickly, looking around with alarm, as Bill stood in the doorway, his eyes wide with fear. "S-s-s-sorry." He mumbled, as he came and sat at the foot of my bed. I glanced at the clock as I stretched. 10:32 AM. I looked back over to my brother, with a raised eyebrow.

"Where's the fire?" I mumbled, still asleep as I rubbed the sleep from my eyes. I looked at my brother again, he looked like he had seen a ghost, a monster, something terrifying. It was the same look in his eyes when the police told us that Georgie was officially missing. It was the same look when he first saw my scars I kept well hidden under my jeans, under my shorts so no one could see the small little lines.

"I s-s-s-saw s-s-s-something," He started, closing his eyes in anger, he hated his stutter, even though none of us did, we had the patience to let him get the words out, unlike some of the other family members that we shared. Mostly our grandparents, who always told my parents to get him to a doctor to get it fixed. "I d-d-d-don't know w-w-what, but s-s-s-sage, it was s-s-s-so s-s-scary." He mumbled out.

I raised an eyebrow and then ruffled his hair, before frowning. Something felt off. Not about Bill, but something, like the universe, had shifted. Or something...

I smiled at Bill as he headed out of my room, telling me something about how he was going to hang out with his friends. I looked around my room for a second, frowning even deeper when I saw a balloon floating in my closet. "The fuck?" I whispered. I got out of bed, avoiding the boards I knew that would creak under my weight. I looked at the blood red latex. Still, as ever, it simply stayed in the same spot. I frowned, and grabbed the string, pulling it to the window, and letting it fly away. I frowned once again as the stench of

rotting flesh, and sewer water hit my nose. I closed my eyes, focusing on breathing out of my mouth.

I knew that if I went downstairs it'd be hell from my parents. They still weren't happy with me, rebelling against their word. I stopped caring, it's been a week since I first broke curfew and I haven't seen Paul since we were at Neibolt. I grabbed my wallet, and moved down the stairs with ease. I needed coffee. I grabbed one of the Thermos cups we had, and filled it with black coffee. I glanced over my shoulder as I added sugar and creamer. Dad stood in the doorway, the same angry expression on his face that he had every time he looked at me. After all, I was the disappointment child. "Where are you going today?" I rolled my eyes before I turned around, making sure that my cigarettes were hidden from sight.

"Out." I raised an eyebrow as I tried my coffee to make sure it was sweet enough. I would never understand how people drank their coffee black. Dad gave a low chuckle, shaking his head. Mom was playing the piano, a tune I didn't recognize.

"No, you're not. You're staying home tonight. I don't know what you're doing with this Paul guy, but the Johnson's told me you went to Neibolt, to that old house?" I cocked an eyebrow, waiting for him to keep talking as I sipped on my coffee. At this rate, I'd have to fill it back up if dad kept talking. "Stay away from him, Sage. He can't be trusted."

I sighed, before taking another long drink of the caffeine. "Like any other adult in this town?" I raised an eyebrow. I didn't let him answer as I pushed past him and walked out of the front door, slamming it behind me. I sighed, glancing down the street as I walked the opposite way. The town was cursed, and something was watching everyone move through the streets. I shook my head and took another drink, glancing at the kids, playing with the hose, screaming with laughter.

"Oh, to be young again," I whispered, smiling when I made it to the main street, looking around for the lanky human that I had grown so attached to. I let out a sigh when I didn't find him, and took a seat on the bench, remembering my brothers' words. He had seen whatever was lurking in the shadows, and it had terrified him so much that he

had shut down.

I let out a heavy sigh as I blew out the smoke of the cigarette resting between my fingers, feeling the nicotine hit my brain, making my body fuzzy and my mind slow. It was a cycle today, coffee, drag, coffee, drag. I watched as people walked in and out of stores, their eyes numb and glassy. The only ones that looked alive were the kids, teenagers, and young adults like myself.

"Y'know," I turned, grinning when I saw Paul. "I heard coffee isn't good for you." I moved my legs as he sat down. "You've been here every day." It wasn't a question, but rather a statement that we both knew was true. I had been here every day of the week, waiting for my tall friend. His eyes turned a light blue, "Sorry, I had something to deal with..." He mumbled, watching a group of kids walk down the street.

I raised an eyebrow as I waved a hand in front of his face, "Earth to Paul, hello." I smiled lightly when he looked back at me, the glassy stare gone, "I don't know what that was, but it was creepy and you probably shouldn't do it again. You'll scare them," I whispered dramatically. He rolled his eyes and blinked at me, a loose smile on his face.

"How're the parents?" I hummed as he asked the question. I put down the cup of coffee and shrugged. The past week...was insane.

"Controlling as ever." I sighed, "They treat me like I'm my brother's age, and I've been the oldest since I was born." I frowned, "That didn't make sense, but it's been hell. They've been trying to give me a bedtime, and they lock the door when they go to bed, so I literally have to sneak out the window, and that shit hurts my knees."

Paul looked down at my knees, frowning at the dried blood and scrapes. He glanced up at me, back with glowing eyes. He took a few minutes to look at my knees, not touch them, simply looked at them. He sat back up and frowned, "Did you clean them?"

"Is that fucking drool?" I laughed, raising an eyebrow as he wiped his mouth, a frown on his face. "You know how I said that the kid's thing was weird? The drool is probably even worse." I gave him shit,

laughing.

"Shut up." He joked, stealing a cigarette from my pack, watching me for a few moments, before stealing my lighter and lighting the cigarette. "We should go on an adventure, like...tonight, after the curfew." His eyes glowed with excitement, as he shook slightly, and bells were heard.

I laughed, glancing at the clock, "Wait at my house, okay? Behind the fence, okay? So my parents don't see you. Do you need me to bring anything?" He thought for a moment and shook his eyes, his eyes still very bright. "I'll see you at eight, okay?" He gave me a large grin and another nod, as I heard bells again.

I grinned at him as he got up, bending down and bopping me on the nose, giving me a giggle. I smiled, and watched as he walked down an alley, knowing that he was gone already